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**STRENGTH IN NUMBERS**

17,500

6300

2009-2010

100

**ANNUAL REPORT**

293

**Society of Louisiana**

64

**Certified Public Accountants**

## Our History

The Society of Louisiana Certified Public Accountants (LCPA) is a non-profit professional association with more than 6,300 members in Louisiana and around the world. Established in 1911, the Society works with CPAs in public practice, industry, government, and education. LCPA members have the benefit of a strong advocacy organization dedicated to unifying CPAs under a high standard of ethics and professionalism.

## Our Mission

The mission of the Society of Louisiana Certified Public Accountants is to serve the common needs of its members and to enhance the professional environment in which they work. The LCPA is committed to serving its members by supplying the necessary support to improve their competency and professionalism, advocating their causes in the government arena and promoting their services among the public.

## Our Staff

The LCPA has 19 full-time staff to serve as advocates for members. The professional and friendly staff is committed to giving members the best value for their membership investment. Member satisfaction is the number-one goal.

### **Society of Louisiana Certified Public Accountants**

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**Our Goals** The LCPA Strategic Plan sets forth eight goals. This 2009-2010 Annual Report describes activities which led to the achievement or accomplishment of each goal or the intent of the goal within.

***The eight goals in the Society's strategic plan are:***

1. To promote the CPA profession and its services to the general public, the business community and governmental entities;
2. To provide members with professional development programs and resources needed to enhance and maintain technical and managerial skills and job performance in a constantly changing environment;
3. To seek to insure members' adherence to professional standards and enhance the public's confidence in the profession;
4. To represent members in the public policy-making process in issues which directly impact the profession and enhance the general business environment;
5. To serve as the representative of Louisiana CPAs in dealing with standard setting bodies and regulatory agencies;
6. To encourage highly qualified individuals to enter accounting education programs and become CPAs and promote enhancement of these programs in the state;
7. To encourage all CPAs in the state to become members of the Society, while promoting the benefits of membership; and
8. To provide an organizational structure which efficiently utilizes volunteer leader and professional staff resources for the continuing development of programs which effectively addresses the expectations of all members.

**Goal #1** To promote the CPA profession and its services to the general public, the business community and governmental entities

### **Institutional Media Campaign**

The LCPA launched a series of new display ads focused on the year-round value of CPAs. Provided by the American Institute of CPAs and customized by the LCPA, the “All Year Long” ads ran during the 2010 tax season in seven daily newspapers throughout the state. Ads promoted the wide scope of CPA services for individuals and businesses and encouraged use of the Society’s CPA Locator Service.

The Society maintained a healthy relationship with local print, radio and television reporters by serving as an information resource and arranging interviews with local CPAs upon request.

### **Public Service through Tax Assistance**

For over 20 years, the Louisiana CPA Tax Hotline and Talk About Taxes television call-in program have provided free tax assistance as a public service.

The 2010 Louisiana CPA Tax Hotline was held on March 3. Throughout the three-hour public service event, hotline volunteers from across the state handled calls on a variety of tax questions, but reported that the most common questions were regarding claiming the New Homebuyer Credit.

Co-sponsored by the LCPA and the New Orleans Chapter, Talk About Taxes was broadcast live on WDSU Channel 6 on March 6 and rebroadcast four times on Cox Cable. The television program included a panel of CPAs which addressed common federal and state tax questions, as well as a CPA phone bank who answered calls from program viewers.

### **Finding a CPA Made Simpler**

Sixty-four public firms subscribed to the CPA Locator Service which lists participating CPAs by nine geographic chapters and 48 Specialized Industry and Client Services. The Locator Service makes it easier for the public and fellow professionals to identify CPAs for engagement.

## **Leading the Financial Literacy Charge**

For the third consecutive year, the LCPA partnered with Junior Achievement of Louisiana for LCPA–JA Financial Literacy Education Days. Starting in late April and extending into early May, the “JA in a Day” program educated and inspired Kindergarten through 6th grade students about work readiness, entrepreneurship, and money management.

LCPA–JA Financial Literacy Day grew to nine days, 16 schools manned by 390 volunteers, reaching over 5,800 students across the state – a 35% increase from 2009 in the number of students impacted by the program.

President Barack Obama declared April as National Financial Literacy Month, Louisiana Governor Bobby Jindal issued a statewide proclamation for Financial Literacy Education Week, and local officials in participating areas likewise issued proclamations calling attention to the need to raise financially responsible children.

In support of National Financial Literacy Month, the Louisiana Children’s Museum approached the LCPA to collaborate on planning activities to teach children how to manage, budget, save, and count money. The result was the first-ever FETCH! Financial Literacy Saturday on April 24.

Volunteers from the LCPA and Whitney National Bank helped over 505 visitors understand how to use money wisely. The LCPA donated 400 read-to-decorate piggy banks for the day’s craft project. FETCH! Financial Literacy Saturday was featured on local TV stations and is expected to become an annual event.

## National Spotlight Shines Bright on Local CPAs' Service

Seven AICPA National Public Service Award winners – *yes, seven*. The LCPA has more recipients than any other state CPA society since the AICPA first presented the award in 1993, not to mention the first-ever consecutive winners in 2008 and 2009. The award is the highest honor for public service leadership, impact, involvement and innovation of an individual CPA nationally.

Karen Mayer Dwyer, CPA, is the recipient of the 2009 AICPA National Public Service Award. Also, recipient of the LCPA's 2009 Distinguished Public Service Award, Karen was nominated for the AICPA award and then selected from a field of candidates that included annual Public Service Award winners of state CPA societies nationwide. Final selection was made by an independent panel of outside judges.

Karen was honored for her volunteer service to the Board of International School of Louisiana, leading it through the labor-intensive process of recovery and rebuilding post-Katrina. She most notably was instrumental in the creation of the International High School of New Orleans and its push to achieve charter school status. The open-enrollment high school offers an academically rigorous, college-preparatory program including a requirement for all students to take a foreign language – the first of its kind in Louisiana.

### *Previous AICPA National Public Service Award Recipients*

- 1994 Lonnie Stockwell, CPA
- 1998 Ralph Stephens, CPA
- 2001 Tommie Vassel, CPA
- 2003 Austin Robertson Jr., CPA
- 2005 Ralph Bender, CPA
- 2008 Beverly Nichols, CPA

### **LCPA Recruited to Prepare AICPA Nomination Package**

Based on the LCPA's history of high-quality and successful nomination packages, the AICPA requested the LCPA's assistance in preparing the submission for the Institute's 2010 nominee for the International Federation of Accountants prestigious Robert Sempier Award. Presented every four years, the award recognizes outstanding leaders of the international accountancy profession.

**Goal #2** To provide members with professional development programs and resources needed to enhance and maintain technical and managerial skills and job performance in a constantly changing environment

### **Banner Year for CPE**

In 2009, the LCPA completed one of its most successful years in CPE reaching new highs thanks to increased member attendance of Society course offerings.

From webinars to webcasts, to convenient phone seminars, the LCPA offered a broad selection of programming styles for a geographically dispersed membership. CPE via webcasts and webinars are available year round, adding to greater accessibility for members.

Self-study options likewise were expanded with the introduction of AICPA's *CPEexpress Select*, a handy way to instantly get online, interactive self-study CPE right from one's desktop. This new, annual CPE option gives subscribers 24/7 unlimited access to over 200 self-study programs with over 300 available CPE credit hours. A wide variety of courses, including Accounting and Auditing, Consulting Services, Management, Taxation and Personal Development are available through this new delivery option, all at a special, negotiated rate for LCPA members.

### **Traditional, Live CPE**

Within the third year of the 2007-2009 CPE cycle, the Society held more than 293 days of courses in all locations combined. In addition to seminars, Brown Bag CPE programs and webcasts, the Society held 12 days of conferences and 13.5 workshops days covering a diversity of topics.

The Society also provided customized, on-site professional development courses to 121 firms and companies. On-site professional development is a very economic way for organizations to fulfill their educational needs while saving travel time and obtaining customized training.

## **Online and On Point**

As the result of member feedback, the Society provided members “one-click” access to marketing descriptions of all CPE courses without have to log into the CPE registration page. This modification enhanced the member experience and made searching for relevant CPE even easier.

This was the first CPE reporting cycle for which the State Board of Certified Public Accountants of Louisiana accepted the Society’s *Online CPE Transcript* as documentation for Section 1 of the State Board’s Continuing Education Reporting Form. The Online Transcript feature enabled members to access their CPE transcript 24/7 and maintain a complete list of CPE courses taken.

To make the Ethics requirement more applicable to the licensed CPAs’ line of work, the State Board of Accountancy allowed CPAs to choose from an assortment of five preapproved programs pertinent to industry, tax practices, general ethics principles, and ethical issues dealing with non attest services.

## **Town Hall Meetings**

The Society implemented Town Hall meetings at each of LCPA’s nine chapters. This member-service driven CPE program provided the latest information concerning the profession. These Town Halls provided four hours of complimentary CPE to members and an opportunity for participants to give feedback on topics of concern relating to their businesses and careers.

## **Partnership with Purpose**

In an effort to provide additional support for LCPA’s business and industry members, the Society partnered with the Louisiana Chapter of Financial Executives International (FEI), KPMG, E&Y, Deloitte & Touche, and PriceWaterhouseCoopers in an effort to reinvigorate the state chapter of FEI.

The state FEI chapter will provide a forum for senior financial executives to meet quality people and share with others solutions to the crucial issues that confront them daily.

## **Federal and State Tax Alerts**

The LCPA's Tax Alerts continued to be distributed via e-mail and posted to the LCPA's home page. Tax Alerts provided "real-time" technical information and notified members of the latest tax interpretations affecting their practice and answered many questions regarding federal, state and local tax issues throughout the year.

## ***Lagniappe***

Published nine times a year, *Lagniappe* is the official publication of the Society of Louisiana CPAs. *Lagniappe* kept members current on the issues affecting the CPA profession, including the latest technical and professional developments, and legislative updates. Current and past issues of *Lagniappe* were posted online, allowing members to access articles when and wherever needed.

## **Access to Senior-Level Society Staff**

LCPA members had easy access to qualified senior staff to answer technical questions. Executive Director Grady Hazel and Communications and Public Relations Director Alex Suffrin assisted members with issues related to the profession and served as liaisons with state and federal agencies for the goal of problem resolution.

**Goal #3** To seek to insure members' adherence to professional standards and enhance the public's confidence in the profession

### **Peer Review**

The Ethics Committee, Peer Review Committee and LCPA staff worked to administer the AICPA's Peer Review Program with the technical review process performed by 24 volunteer members of the committee. The Peer Review Committee also worked with the State Board to improve the program and level the playing field for our members in the Peer Review area.

2009 was the first year of transitioning CPAs from the State Board of Accountancy's practice review program to the Society's Peer Review Program and providing more transparency in the program to the State Board. Also, the Society worked closely with the Legislative Auditor in its effort to manage the requirement of firms performing governmental work to provide Peer Review reports to the Legislative Auditor. The Society will continue to work with these two organizations in order to make it easier for members to comply with requirements.

### **Ethics Compliance**

The Ethics Committee responded to and investigated complaints brought before them to insure our members' compliance with the ethics code.

**Goal #4** To represent members in the public policy making process in issues which directly impact the profession and enhance the general business environment

**Goal #5** To serve as the representative of Louisiana CPAs in dealing with standard setting bodies and regulatory agencies

Among the LCPA's strongest efforts on behalf of the members was to represent constituents in the public policy making process on issues which directly impact the profession and enhance the general business environment, and to serve as the representative of Louisiana CPAs in dealing with standard setting bodies and regulatory agencies.

### **Legislative Branch of State Government**

The Society, in cooperation with Greater New Orleans Inc., was successful in passing legislation to exempt from Louisiana individual income tax, capital gains on the sale of a Louisiana-based business. This was one of the most significant economic development bills to pass during the 2009 legislative session.

In the 2010 legislative session, the Society sponsored legislation that would prohibit the suspension or interruption of prescription for certain taxes when the taxpayer fails to file a return. The Society also sponsored legislation to allow multiple associations to be members of the same group health plan or be member of an insurance trust.

In addition, the Society played a major role in successfully modifying legislation that would have dramatically affected the financial and accounting policies and operations of non-profits who receive government money. The Society was successful in getting the author to remove all of the objectionable parts of the bill. LCPA's participation in the negotiations concerning this bill prevented many unnecessary requirements for CPAs who work for non-profits and CPAs with non-profit clients.

Also, in the 2010 session, the Society worked diligently to oppose legislation that would have affected the financial stability of our State Board.

As a follow up to the LCPA's success in implementing "No Notification, No Fee" legislation in Louisiana, there now are 46 states that have implemented this mobility provision as of June 2010; Massachusetts will do so effective January 1, 2011. The legislation makes it easier for CPAs to practice across state lines.

As a member of the Coalition to Insure Louisiana, the Society continued to work with the Coalition to assure that Louisiana created the right environment to encourage competition in the property insurance market and to attract additional companies to the state.

The Society again produced the *Income Tax Guide for State Legislators* which is provided to every member of the Louisiana Senate and House of Representatives, as well as posted on the LCPA's website and sent to members upon request.

### **Executive Branch of State Government**

The Society of Louisiana CPAs was the only Louisiana organization asked to assist the Commission on Streamlining Government. The Society issued a report providing suggestions for streamlining the Louisiana Department of Revenue and also a report outlining a model that could be used to implement "Full Cost Recovery" should the Governor or the Legislature wish to do this. The Commission was very grateful for the assistance and expressed their appreciation for LCPA's service and expertise throughout the process. The Society's participation in the Commission's work generated much goodwill for the CPA profession among legislators.

The LCPA represented the profession before the Louisiana Department of Revenue and was instrumental in getting the agency to verify and implement policies that recognize there is a 10-year prescription for taxes in Louisiana.

The Society held numerous liaison meetings with the Louisiana Department of Revenue, Louisiana Association of Tax Administrators, Louisiana Department of Labor and regulators for financial institutions. Reports of the meetings and relevant points of discussion were published in *Lagniappe*.

The LCPA provided model Agreed Upon Procedures which the Louisiana Department of Economic Development adopted for the Digital Music Credit.

The Society served as the advocate before the Louisiana Department of Revenue and the Internal Revenue Service representing CPAs' position on various tax issues and then informing members through our Tax Alerts of the results of those efforts. The Society monitored and worked with State Board of Accountancy to insure that CPAs continued to have a regulatory environment that aided the profession while protecting the public.

In keeping with the Society's long history of working with State Board of Certified Public Accountants of Louisiana, the LCPA hosted a Centennial Celebration Dinner to honor the Board's Century of Public Service including its current and former members.

### **Federal Government**

The Society has been very active at the Federal level as well. Letters were written to Louisiana Senators expressing the Society's support for section 404(b) of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act.

In addition, Senators were contacted by telephone and letters expressing strong opposition to Senator Specter's amendment that would permit a private right of action for aiding and abetting violations under the Securities and Exchange Act of 1934. LCPA asked for the Louisiana delegation to support were a bill to require that the Comptroller General be filled by a licensed CPA

The Society communicated with the Federal Trade Commission requesting that CPAs be exempt from the "Red Flag" rule and comment to the Internal Revenue Center on their proposed regulations concerning registration of paid tax preparers.

**Goal #6** To encourage highly qualified individuals to enter accounting education programs and become CPAs and promote enhancement of these programs in the state

The Society, through volunteers and committee efforts, worked diligently to encourage highly qualified individuals to enter accounting education programs and become CPAs.

### **Connecting with Accounting Students**

As the exclusive sponsors, the LCPA and the Baton Rouge Chapter hosted a successful career awareness event for LSU accounting students.

Throughout the school year, the Society provided speakers to Beta Alpha Psi (BAP) and National Association of Black Accountants (NABA) chapters to address a variety of accounting-related topics.

The LCPA participated with the President of the Society in the Nicholls Student Interview Night. The LCPA also joined with the Northshore, Baton Rouge and New Orleans chapters in hosting accounting students and discussing various career opportunities for CPAs.

### **Connecting with the Profession's Educators**

In March 2010, the LCPA sponsored the annual Accounting Educators Workshop. A total of 33 educators representing 10 Louisiana colleges and universities attended the event designed to help accounting faculty stay abreast of current issues. The program provides a valuable link between educators and practitioners, showcases the latest instructional technologies, and enables the Society to support university faculty and reach students in a productive manner.

### **Scholarships to Support the Future of the Profession**

The LCPA Education Foundation was established to further the development of accounting education and the accounting profession. Amounts awarded are based on donations made to the Foundation by members. The Foundation also maintains an endowment to sustain the scholarship money for students in the future.

In 2010, the Society of Louisiana CPAs Education Foundation awarded \$17,500 in Scholarships to 24 students, including the Kit Smith Scholarship of \$3,000 to Kristopher Eldredge of Louisiana Tech; the Alex Postlethwaite Scholarship of \$1,000 to Molly Marino of Louisiana State University; the Will Elliot Scholarship of \$750 to Jamie Gray of Louisiana Tech; and the Richard Roth Scholarship of \$1,000 to Timothy Smith of Louisiana Tech.

The Education Foundation also awarded a scholarship to a PhD candidate in effort to assist the profession's emphasis on the shortage of PhDs in accounting.

### **Tribute Honors African-American CPAs and Promotes Profession to Minority Accounting Students**

The Greater New Orleans Chapter of the National Association of Black Accountants (NABA) and the Harrison-Rochon, CPAs Educational Foundation, Inc. paid tribute to Louisiana's First 100 African American Certified Public Accountants in April 2010. The LCPA was proud to be among the event sponsors to honor the outstanding contributions of the first 100, many of whom are LCPA members.

Over 375 attended the inaugural gala held at the Westin Hotel New Orleans on April 2 to celebrate the distinguished trailblazers who overcame social and educational barriers to become the first of their race in Louisiana to earn the CPA designation. More than 50 of the 100 honorees, and/or a family member representing deceased honorees, came from throughout Louisiana, Mississippi, Texas, and Georgia.

The goal of the gala was not only to honor the outstanding men and women who created a trail for other CPAs to follow, but also to promote the accounting profession to college and high school students.

**Goal #7** To encourage all CPAs in the state to become members of the Society, while promoting the benefits of membership

In early April 2010, the Society conducted a mailing to medium and large public firm employers requesting they review a provided listing of members currently linked to the firm's record in the LCPA's database. Of approximately 850 mailed, 522 replied (61% return). The result not only helped to update information on file, but also identified licensed, non-member CPAs who were subsequently recruited to membership.

Using lists provided by the State Board of CPAs of individuals who received CPA certificates, the LCPA continues to recruit potential members.

As noted previously, Tax Alerts continued to be distributed, reinforcing the value of being a member.

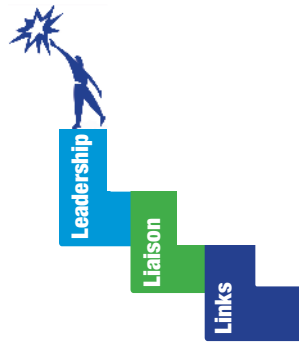
The Society's membership continues a steady increase, as the LCPA has done each year since Katrina. Between May 2009 and April 2010, the LCPA reported an increase of 300 members (176 new regular members, 58 new students members, and 66 reinstated members).

**Goal #8** To provide an organizational structure which efficiently utilizes volunteer leader and professional staff resources for the continuing development of programs which effectively addresses the expectations of all members

### **3-L Model for Success Inspires Action**

Introduced in 2008 to all nine chapter boards, the *3-L Model for Success*, continued to be strongly supported by the Society at the local level. As part of this effort, LCPA staff visited each chapter board to assist in local planning efforts and focusing chapter leaders on those programs which best align with the Society's stated goals.

All meetings began with an overview of the Model and an explanation of how it contributed to each chapter's success in developing Leaders, establishing Links with other organizations, and serving as a Liaison between the state Society and local members. While chapters share some similarities, each faced unique challenges and had varying available resources. Therefore, each chapter board defined its respective chapter's purpose, set goals for the upcoming year, and discussed challenges and opportunities for change.



**3-L Model for Success**

The 3-L Model gave chapters the freedom to try new things, and nearly all chapters elected to expand its programs and events. Several chapter boards decided to target the younger generation of CPAs. These efforts included, forming a Young CPA Committee on the local level, sponsoring social events, and providing mentors for new CPAs.

All nine chapters also chose to either develop new student outreach projects or enhance current programs. These activities have been successful in providing a link to both the universities and the students. Projects included social events to connect students with local employers, sponsorship of Beta Alpha Psi programs, and funding scholarships.

The 3-L meetings opened the lines of communication between the chapters and the state Society, and as requested, will continue each year as part of the individual chapter's annual planning process. The 3-L Model provides not only a framework for chapter success, but Society success in a cooperative effort to accomplish the association's overall mission.

### **Young CPAs Score Points**

The Young CPA Board ended its inaugural two-year term, and new chapter appointments were made.

Northshore Chapter Young CPA Board Member Lisa Saragusa, along Northshore Chapter Young CPA Committee members Brian Gallagher, Stacey Page and Sara Franatovich organized the first annual Southeastern Louisiana University Not-So-Pro Volleyball Tournament. Held in April following tax season, the event featured over 90 participants including five teams from three local CPA firms, one team from Entergy, five SLU student teams, and one SLU faculty team. The event is expected to be held annually in the Northshore chapter, and the Young CPA Board plans to organize similar events statewide.

### **Society Leaders Train for the Year Ahead**

LCPA board members, committee chairs, and chapter board representatives gathered in May at the Society's Annual Leadership Workshop to network, share ideas, plan for their leadership roles. Meetings of the incoming chapter presidents and presidents-elect, the Young CPA Board, the LCPA Board of Directors, and Committee on Evaluations and Appointments were also held.

### **Society Committees & Task Forces**

Each year Society members have an opportunity to volunteer for one or more of the LCPA's 30 committees or task forces. Three to four hundred members are chosen through a careful selection process. Committee involvement offers members the opportunity to build valuable leadership skills, interact with fellow members, and share their skills and talents to help create a successful future for the CPA profession.

## LCPA Member Group-Buying Programs

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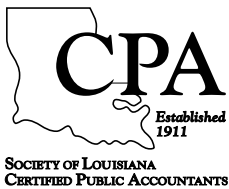
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